

REMARKS

The Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner consider the following remarks in addition to the above claim amendment.

After entry of the above claim amendments, there will be four independent claims pending in the application, namely claims 29, 30, 31, and 32. Each of these independent claims and its respective family of dependent claims is discussed in turn below.

Claims 8-12, 16, and 29

Claim 29 is an independent claim, and claims 8-12 and 16 depend directly or indirectly from claim 29.

In the 30 November 2006 Office action, claims 8, 9, 10, 11, and 29 stand allowed. The Applicant has made no changes to these five claims in this amendment.

Previously withdrawn claims 12 and 16 each depends directly from allowed independent claim 29. Thus, the Applicant again respectfully requests the rejoinder and allowance of claims 12 and 16 as depending from allowed claim 29.

Claims 5, 15, and 30

In the 30 November 2006 Office action, the Examiner stated that dependent claim 4 "would be allowed if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim." 30 Nov. 2006 OA at p. 4. Thus, the Applicant has now rewritten claim 4 as new independent claim 30. New claim 30 includes all of the limitations of base claim 28 (there were no intervening claims). The Applicant has canceled claims 4 and 28.

Dependent claim 5 has been amended to depend directly from new independent claim 30, and previously withdrawn claim 15 depends directly from dependent claim 5. Thus, the Applicant again respectfully requests the rejoinder and allowance of claim 15 as depending indirectly from what the Applicant believes is allowable independent claim 30.

The Applicant respectfully requests allowance of new independent claim 30 and of its dependent claims 5 and 15.

Claim 31

In the 30 November 2006 Office action, the Examiner stated that dependent claim 6 “would be allowed if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim.” 30 Nov. 2006 OA at p. 4. Thus, the Applicant has now rewritten claim 6 as new independent claim 31. New claim 31 includes all of the limitations of base claim 28 (there were no intervening claims). In addition to canceling claim 28 (as noted above), the Applicant has canceled claim 6.

The Applicant respectfully requests allowance of new independent claim 31.

Claims 13, 14, 17-22, 24, and 32

In the 30 November 2006 Office action, the Examiner stated that dependent claim 23 “would be allowed if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim.” 30 Nov. 2006 OA at p. 4. Thus, the Applicant has now rewritten claim 23 as new independent claim 32. New claim 32 includes all of the limitations of base claim 28 (there were no intervening claims). In addition to canceling claim 28 (as noted above), the Applicant has canceled claim 23.

Dependent claims 13, 14, 17-22, and 24 have been amended to depend directly or indirectly from new independent claim 32. Claims 13, 14, and 24 currently stand withdrawn. The Applicant again respectfully requests the rejoinder and allowance of claims 13 and 14 as depending from what the Applicant believes is allowable independent claim 32. The Applicant also requests the rejoinder and allowance of claim 24 as depending directly from allowable independent claim 32.

The Applicant respectfully requests allowance of new independent claim 32 and of its dependent claims 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 24.

Amendment to Drawing Sheets 1/9 and 6/9

On 7 September 2006, the Applicant filed amended drawing sheets 1/9 and 6/9. In the 30 November 2006 Office action, the Examiner did not indicate whether the amended drawing sheets were accepted. The Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner’s approval of those amended drawings sheets.

Conclusion

The Applicant believes that each of the claims remaining in this application following this amendment, namely claims 5, 8-22, 24, and 29-32, is now in condition for allowance. The Applicant is filing herewith a petition for a 6-month extension of time, and the Applicant is paying the associated extension fee. If the Examiner has any further questions, she is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted this 30th day of May 2007.

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cc: Client
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